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THE AVAILABILITY OF TRUCKS TO SUPPORT
THE TIBETAN CAMPAIGN

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1. The 60,000 Chinese troops estimated to be in the Tibet Military District require 256 tons of supplies daily. Assuming that resupply is limited to the Lan-chou - Lhasa road, this would involve the continuous operation of nearly 4,700 trucks. If the present garrison is increased to 90,000 troops, 385 tons of supplies daily involving the continuous operation of 7,000 trucks would be required. This approximates the traffic capacity of this road based on 25 trucks per hour for a 10-hour day.

2. A conservative estimate of the total military truck park available in Tibet and adjacent military regions is 12,000,

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3. Assuming that trucks organic to combat units will be retained in local supply and tactical operations, the motor transport truck park available for long distance logistical support on the Lan-chou - Lhasa road would approximate 5,300 units. Thus, the available military truck park is adequate for the present garrison of 60,000. If the garrison is increased to 90,000, supply could still be maintained since the additional troops not only would bring their organic truck park,

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but also would be accompanied by independent motor transport units -- the People's Liberation Army (PLA) has adequate trucks in most parts of China to divert additional transport units to Tibet without curtailing priority uses elsewhere.

4. Although there are an estimated 6,000 civilian trucks engaged in economic activities (petroleum, non-ferrous mining, etc.) in Kansu, Tsinghai, and Sinkiang, their importance to the local economy is too great to permit the diversion of more than relatively few trucks to the Tibet operation. Probably some, however, could be used without serious impact on the local economies. Additional trucks used by the PLA for agricultural-construction purposes also could be diverted on the same limited basis to Tibet. In the unlikely event that large numbers of civilian trucks were needed, most of them would come from eastern areas which, having shorter average hauls, permit the substitution of primitive transport, of which China has an almost unlimited supply.

Thus, it is estimated that the PLA has adequate trucks to provide support for 90,000 troops without resorting to a levy on the civilian economy. In the event that such a levy were necessary, it may be noted that all 7,000 trucks could be replaced in less than 5 months from current Chinese production.

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